

Claims:

Claim 1. A fastener assembly comprising:

a fastener;
a barrier engaged with the fastener via an aperture, the aperture being configured and dimensioned to create an interference fit with the fastener; and
a washer having an opening therein, the opening receiving the barrier.

Claim 2. A fastener assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein the barrier includes an outside dimension and configuration calculated to form an interference fit with the washer opening.

Claim 3. A fastener assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein the barrier includes at least one detent to secure the barrier in the washer opening.

Claim 4. A fastener assembly as claimed in claim 3 wherein the at least one detent is a ridge.

Claim 5. A fastener assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein the barrier comprises a tubular body.

Claim 6. A fastener assembly as claimed in claim 5 wherein the barrier further comprises a flange extending radially outwardly from the tubular body.

Claim 7. A fastener assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein the barrier is constructed at least in part of a lubricious material.

Claim 8. A fastener assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein the barrier is a single unitary piece of plastic.

Claim 9. A barrier comprising:

a body having one or more outside dimensions calculated to engage an opening in a washer in an interference fit sufficient to retain the washer on the body in an assembly;

an aperture in the body extending at least substantially through the body, said aperture in the body having a dimension and configuration to create an interference fit with a fastener.

Claim 10. A barrier as claimed in claim 9 wherein the sleeve further comprises a flange extending radially outwardly of the one or more outside dimensions of the body.

Claim 11. A barrier as claimed in claim 9 wherein the body further includes at least one detent.

Claim 12. A barrier as claimed in claim 11 wherein said detent is a ridge.

Claim 13. A barrier as claimed in claim 9 wherein the barrier is constructed at least in part of a lubricious material.

Claim 14. A barrier as claimed in claim 9 wherein the barrier is constructed at least in part of a plastic material.

Claim 15. A method for assembling a washer/fastener assembly comprising:
placing a barrier in contact with a washer;
installing the barrier in an opening in the washer; and
urging a fastener into the barrier.

Claim 16. A method for assembling a washer/fastener assembly as claimed in claim 15 wherein said installing the barrier in the opening in the washer utilizes an interference fit.

Claim 17. A method for assembling a washer/fastener assembly as claimed in claim 15 wherein said urging is against an interference fit contact.

Claim 18. A method for dispensing a powder driven fastener while protecting a surface coating of a washer and the fastener during the driving of the fastener through the washer comprising:

- installing in a washer having an opening and a coating thereon, a barrier configured, dimensioned and positioned to protect the washer from scraping by a fastener driven therethrough;

- installing a fastener in the barrier such that the fastener is engaged in interference fit with the barrier; and

- driving the fastener through the barrier and washer while maintaining the fastener and washer out of contact with each other.